



*Winning CHRIST, and being found
in him, considered:*

IN TWO
SERMONS
ON THE
DEATH

Of the REVEREND
Mr. ROBERT BRAGGE.

Publish'd at the Unanimous Request of that
CHURCH to which he was Pastor.

By THOMAS BRADBURY.

London:

Printed for J. OSWALD, at the *Rose and Crown* in the *Poultry*,
near *Stocks-Market*; and J. BUCKLAND, at the *Buck* in
Pater-noster Row. M.DCC XXXVIII.

(Price Sixpence.)

3609

W. Musgrave.



PHILIPPIANS iii. 8, 9.

~~That I may win Christ, and be found in him.~~

HERE are Three Things that give this Text a Recommendation to the regard of every one, who has a Concern about his own Happiness; the Person who speaks these Words, the Matter contained in them, and the Reference they have to a certain Season. We may read the whole with fear and trembling; to see, in the highest Example of Religion, that the Righteous are but *scarcely saved*. Consider,

First, The Person, from whom this Declaration comes, was one of the greatest Attainments, and the deepest Experience: In *Visions*² *Cot. xii.* and *Revelations* of the Lord he was not a whit ¹ Pet. iv. 18. behind the chiefest of the Apostles. In Labours more abundant; in Prisons more frequent; and in Deaths oft. His Devotion to Christ, his Communion with him; what he did, what he suffered, what he received, and what he improv'd, are an Argument that he feared the Lord *above many*. We should have thought that such an one was above all Care about his own Salvation; that there was nothing left him to do, but to take heed to the

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Flock ; that, as to himself, there was no need of any more working ; and yet he has given ^{1 Cor. ix.} us another Representation of his Case, that ^{27.} he *kept under his Body*, and brought it into subjection, lest by any means, after he had preach'd to others, he himself should be a Cast-away. So that with all his assurance, he looked upon himself in perpetual danger, as you will see in the next Observation.

Secondly, That the *Thing* he desires and wishes for, is, that he may *win Christ, and be found in him*. The Surprize of the Case is, that he should be thoughtful about gaining what he had got *already*. He had reach'd Christ, when Christ reach'd him. When the Son of God was *revealed in him*, he knew him ^{If. xlv. 23.} from that moment to be the *Lord his Righteousness and Strength*. He was to feel as a Believer what he *taught* as a Minister, that we ^{A&t. xxvi.} are to receive Forgiveness of Sins by *Faith that 18. is in Jesus*. He was found *in Christ*, when he was found *by him*. He counted that but Loss, which he had *done*, and that but Dung, which he had *lost*. And surely after this, winning Christ, and being found in him, is not to be consider'd as a *Thing to come*.

What was he doing all this while, but working *for Christ*, and working *to him*? And what had he got but a Place, a Portion, and a Refuge in him? He had declar'd against any *Confidence in the Flesh*. His Ceremonial Dignities he had despis'd at Conversion : Religious Duties he had renounc'd in Justification: Temporal

poral Enjoyments he had deserted in the whole of his Profession ; and therefore where could he be found all this Time ? In whose Cause ? And in whose Protection ? It was *Christ* that ^{ch. i. 20.} he desir'd to magnify in his mortal Body, whether by Life or by Death : And yet you see, that he speaks of *winning* him, and being *found* in him, as if it was now to begin : which we may account for from the next Observation.

Thirdly, That he does this with a regard to some particular *Time* or *Period*, when his winning Christ would be most needful, and being found in him the most evident. And though these are always pleasant, and never to be lost or drop'd ; yet there is a Day in which, like a Shock of Corn fully ripe, they will be most *in season* ; a Day in which our Souls will be most careful about them, and shall be most happy in them.

And this is the time *appointed for us to die*, *Heb. ix.* and go immediately to Judgment. That's the ^{27.} Day that shall *declare every Man's Work* : And ^{1 Cor. iii.} when the Judge makes manifest the Counsels ^{13.} of all Hearts, *every Man shall have praise of* ^{iv. 5.} *God*. When Christ calls us to stand at his Bar, then to *gain him* as our Friend, and to be *found in him* as our Surety, will be more than all the *good Hopes* we have through Grace, all ² *Theſſ. ii.* the *Peace and Joy* we had in believing. So ^{16.} *Rom. xv.* that our Apostle wishes for himself the same ^{13.} that he does for good *Onesiphorus*, the Lord ² *Tim. i.* grant that he may find mercy at the hand of ^{18.} the Lord *in that day* ! This so far exceeds every

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every Consolation of God that we have at present, that it is no wonder the Holy Spirit does so often mention it as a Thing intirely *new* : That though Christians have it from the Day of their religious Nativity ; yet those *former* ^{Rev. xxi.} _{4. 5.} *Things* are all forgotten, as not fit to come into mind. They are lost and sunk in the last Action of him, who sits upon the Throne, to *make all Things new*. You frequently have the same Favours mentioned as both present and future ; what we have in Hand, and what we have only in Hope ; as it is said in the same Verse, that we are *saved by Hope*, and yet this is immediately corrected, or explain'd, ^{Rom. viii.} _{24.} *Hope that is seen is not Hope*, for what a Man sees, why doth he yet hope for ? but hoping for a thing is with patience waiting for it.

I will give you this in Four Heads, which all relate to the Blessings mentioned in my Text, an Attainment of Christ, and an Interest *in him*. And these are all cast into this double Form : They are spoke of, both as receiv'd, and as reserv'd. An Union to God ; a Justification by Christ ; a Conformity to him ; and a Communion with him.

(1.) Our Union to God is mentioned both these ways. 'Tis a Reality, an Experience. ^{Cor. vi.} _{17.} Believers are now *join'd to the Lord*, and made *one Spirit* with him. As the Apostle could say in a Storm at Sea, with a Calm of Mind, there ^{A&t xxvii.} _{23.} stood by me the Angel of God, *whose I am*, and whom I serve. This is laid down in Words that we may admire, but can never unfold ; whoever

whoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him, and he in God. And ^{1 John iv.} yet,
^{5.}

This is sometimes placed *afar off*, as what is not given, but designed. They *shall be mine*, ^{Mal. iii.} faith the Lord, in the day that I make up my ^{17.} Jewels; and though he has ever spared them according to the greatness of his Mercy; yet in the best way he *will then spare them*, as a Man spares his own Son that serves him.

(2.) Our Justification and Pardon by Christ is not only a Privilege in this Life, but a perfect one. There is *no Condemnation* to them ^{Rom. viii.} that are in Christ Jesus, no Degree, no Shadow ^{1.} of it. This is the original Benefit we have in the new Covenant, I will be merciful to their ^{Heb. viii.} Transgressions, and their Sins and their Iniqui- ^{12.} ties will I remember no more. And yet,

As to the Evidence and Pleasure of it, there is no Comparison between all *the Witness of the Spirit* with our Spirits now, and the Testimony that will be given at last: And therefore we read of having our Iniquities blotted ^{Acts iii.} out, *when the times of refreshing shall come from the Presence of the Lord*. Refreshings we have by the way: Our Souls are *satisfied* as with Marrow and Fatness; but this is an *Ανάγενσις*, a second Life, a Renewal of that, which makes us *living Souls*. And though something of this is what we wait and hope for in every Ordinance; yet that amounts to no more than *a little Reviving* in our Bondage. But there are ^{Ezra ix. 8.} set times of this refreshing, a Day that God has

has appointed for it; and this is to be *from the Presence of the Lord*. What we have now is a thing drawn thro' Distance and Darkness; it loses by the Length of the Conveyance; but then it comes----darting all at once from the *Light of his Countenance*. When the ransomed of the Lord come to the Heights of Zion, it is with Songs of an higher Pitch and sweeter Note, having everlasting Joy upon their Heads, Sighing and Sorrow being fled away; they have nothing but pure Gladness left.

(3.) Our Conformity to Christ is a Blessing mentioned with this Variety. Brethren, ^{now} _{1 Joh. iii, 2} we are *the Sons of God*; in his Image, in his Likeness; But it doth *not yet appear what we shall be*. We can never be of a better Family than we are, *the Children of the living God*. But this will be more apparent, more abundant. Christ owns *us*, as we own *him*, against all the Contradiction of Sinners. He is not _{Heb. ii.} ashamed to *call us Brethren*; he means in this _{11, 12, 13} Life, saying, *I will declare thy Name unto my Brethren*, in the midst of the *Church* will I sing Praises to thee. But what is this to the great Acknowledgment? when he looks around, and speaks aloud, *Behold I, and the Children, whom God hath given me!* We are daily presented to the Mercy-seat in our Faults and Follies, in answer to the Accuser of the Brethren, who there accuses us before God *day and night*: But when we come to be presented *faultless* before his own Glory, it will be *with an exceeding Joy*; a Joy exceeding all that he has in *us*, and we have in *him*. (4.)

(4.) Our Communion with him is both received and reserved. This is the present Benefit of all Church-Society. We write unto you, that your Fellowship may be *with us*, and truly our Fellowship is *with the Father*, and *with his Son Jesus Christ*. If you have tasted that the Lord is gracious, you can say, that his Word is sweeter than Honey, or the Honey-comb. This at present is intermitted, interrupted, varied, altered, contracted, or enlarged at the pleasure of him, that gives us our Portion in due Season. We have not always equal Meals, or equal Appetites. Our Mouths are too often out of taste, which makes us weary of the Manna, and call Angels Food by the name of light Bread.

^{1 Joh. i. 3.}

^{Psal.}
^{Ixxviii. 25.}

But the Palate shall be right, when the Table is full. We shall have both Capacities and Inclinations suitable to the Joy that is at God's right hand, and the Rivers of Pleasure that are for evermore. Whilst the *Manna*, the Bread of Heaven, is rain'd down in the Wilderness, we gather it *at a certain rate every day*: But when we come to eat it as the *Corn of the Land*, it will no more be measur'd, or spoke of as little or much: on the one hand, there will be *nothing* over, and on the other, there will be *no lack*.

All these Particulars are what my Text is either comprehensive of, or relating to, winning Christ, and being found in him: So that I shall do no more upon these Words, than

I. Give you some Account of these two Expressions, in which the Apostle utters the Desire of his Soul.

II. Show you upon what Reasons these Favours are most needful, advantagious, and pleasing upon the Borders of the two Worlds, when we are going out of the one, and going into the other.

III. Make some Application.

Ver. 13.

I. The thing that our Apostle had most at heart, when the time of his Departure was at hand, was, that he might *win Christ, and be found in him*: This, as he says in the Chapter before us, is *the one thing that he did*, the chief of those things that were *before him*, the *Mark* that he aimed at, the *Prize of the high Calling* that he laboured for. Here are two Words, but they bear very much the same Sense.

I. That he might *win Christ*. 'Tis an Expression not unfrequent in the New Testament; and seems to denote the last Event, or Gains of a Man's Labour: What he *aims at* in all his Cares: what he *gets* by all his Pains. Thus, in the Parable of the Talents, he that had received five, is order'd to lay them out in trading, till his Lord came. He does so, and is able to give up his Accounts with joy. Thou deliveredst unto me five Talents, not merely as a Gift, but as a Trust; and I have gain'd besides them five Talents more; and therefore I return thee thine own with Usury.

The

Matt xxv.

20.

Exodus.

The same Word does the Apostle use in the same way, as denoting the End and Scope of the Ministry that he had received, for which he liv'd with a Latitude of Temper and Affection that made him *become all things to all Men*, that he might *gain the more*. That was, as he says, all the *Fruit of his Labour*, whilst he abode in the Flesh. For this cause he cast the Net of the Gospel into the Sea, that he might have a full Draught. In this view are Preachers made to be Fishers of Men. Their main Design was not to feed themselves with Riches and Honours, and sit among the Princes of the Land. If these are Successors of an Apostle, they follow ways in which they had no Leader: but to *feed the Flock with Knowledge and Understanding*: Not seeking mine own Profit, says our Apostle, but the Profit of many that they may be saved. And it is in this Light *alone*, that he who *desires the Office of a Bishop, desires a good Work*. If what he means by it, is only to raise himself, and inrich his Family, that Man shall be a *Cast-away*.

And in this Epistle he uses the Word to signify a thing that Man's Wisdom can neither teach, nor learn. To me to live is Christ, and *to die is Gain*: that is, he should *then get*, what he had been labouring and looking, watching and waiting for. So that he here considers *Christ*, as the Prize set before him: what he is working *for*, and working *to*. If he fell short of that, he had done nothing. If

he reach'd this *Mark*, as he was *pressing* to it, like a faithful Servant he must enter into the Joy of his Lord. This is the whole of his Profession, his Practice, his Hopes, and Cares.

'Tis both the lowest, and the highest Act of

^{2 Tim. iv. 8.} Religion, to *love the Appearance* of our Great

Redeemer. The weakest Believer has *no less* than this; and the strongest has *no more*. They only differ in degree. And well may this be called his *Gain*, when it is,

1.) The Reward of his Work.

2.) The Crown of his Cause.

3.) The Close of his Troubles. And

4.) The Gift of his God. In all these Characters is Christ reveal'd and offer'd, pursued and attain'd.

^{2 Cor. v. 9.} 1.) Winning Christ is the *Reward* of his Work. To this purpose we *labour*, that whether present with the Lord, or absent from him, *we may be accepted of him*.

I hope there is no danger of mistaking what now I say, or putting a Sense upon the Word, that will make it less to the Praise of the Glory of Free Grace. The Scripture has abundantly secured the Meaning of its own Language, and plainly called that a *Reward*, which is of

^{4.} *Grace*, and not of *Debt*. The Happiness of another Life is exposed at the End of all our Religion in this, that we may *strive* to enter in at the strait Gate. Be stedfast, unmove-

^{1 Cor. xv. 58.} able, always *abounding in the Work of the Lord*, knowing that your Labour is *not in vain* in the Lord. I follow after, says the Apostle, if

by any means I may attain to the Resurrection of the dead ; not as if I had already attain'd, or were already perfect. And what is this Resurrection of the dead, that he strove to attain, but that he might apprehend that, for which he was apprehended of Christ Jesus ? When Christ apprehended him, he shew'd him the Merit, by which he must be justified, and the Grace by which he is to be sanctified. When he comes to apprehend each of these, it will be the great Reward of his Labours.

We don't work and strive to make a Righteousness of our own, but to see and know one in another. And the full Assurance of that is Col. ii. 2. Riches enough, and worth all the Pains we can take for it. Our Duties, our Travail night and day, the Time we devote to God, the Zeal we expend for him, are all for the Prize set before us. The Generality of the World, see no need of Holiness; because they see no need of Heaven. They think it not worth their while to keep the Sabbaths of the Lord, and to walk before him in all his Commandments and Ordinances. And we need not wonder that they desire not the Knowledge of his ways, when they suppose that it is no Profit if they pray unto him. But,

It is this that draws the Believer to his Duty, and warms him in it. *The Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord* is that which can sweeten all the Worship that he pays him now, and will reward it at last. This made Moses refuse to be called the Son of

Heb. xi. 24, 25, 26. of Pharaoh's Daughter ; and choose rather to suffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a season ; esteeming the Reproach of Christ greater Riches than all the Treasures of Egypt, because he had respect unto the Recompence of Reward. And what regard he had to Christ in this, you will conclude from his enduring, by seeing him who is invisible.

Rom. ii. 7. 2.) Winning Christ is the Crown of a Believer's Cause. By a patient continuance in well-doing they seek for Honour, Glory, and Immortality. Their Honour they receive from Christ ; their Glory they have with him ; their Life and Immortality are brought to light by him.

A&t. xvi. 12. This way of talking was well known among the Grecians, and especially at Philippi, which was the chief City in that part of Macedonia. In their Olympic Games, their Battles, their Races, they all run, and fought,

1 Cor. ix. 24, 25, 26. and strove, and wrestled, and but one received the Prize. Our Affairs are better set.

We do not run uncertainly, as some of them must do ; nor do we fight as beating the Air, which several of them might as well have been doing. And yet, what pains were there taken ? What Preparations by Diet and Exercise to ob-

2 Tim. ii. 5. tain a corruptible Crown ? Every one that strove for the Mastery must be temperate in all things : nor was he crown'd unless he strove lawfully, according to certain Rules : And this intitled

intitled them to no more than an airy Character: They only got an empty Name by it.

But we do it for a Reality; a true, solid Crown; and which is more than all the World can give us, *an incorruptible one, a Crown of Glory that fades not away.* And as they had their Arbitrators, who decided every Case, and settled every Claim; so the *Lord the righteous*² Tim. iv. Judge will give to those that have fought a good fight, and kept the Faith, the Crown of Righteousness that is *laid up for them.*

Our Cause is under Contempt. Christ himself is a *Stone of stumbling*, and a Rock of offence; and so is the Gospel, for Infidelity ¹ Pet. ii. *stumbles at the Word.* Christ as crucified was ¹ Cor. i. ²³ a *Stumbling-block to the Jews*; unto the *Greeks* he was *Foolishness*. His Sabbaths are a *Weariness*; his Word a *Reproach*; his People the *Filth of the World*, and the *Off-scouring of all Things*: But are *he* and *we*, his Person and his Ways, his Work and his Servants to be always of no Reputation? Is there no brightening up of an Interest that is pursued by them, who are the *Excellent of the Earth*; and main- ^{Psal. xvi.} tain'd by him who is gone *far above all Hea-*³ ^{Eph. iv.} *vens?* Yes; though you see him a little lower ¹⁰ than the Angels, for the suffering of Death, yet is he *crown'd with Glory and Honour*, to ^{Heb. ii. 9.} fill up his relation to you, and shew that by the Grace of God he tasted Death for every Man.

The great Burden of our Religion is the main Credit of it; that is, our owning him, not

not being ashamed of him in the midst of a perverse and adulterous Generation ; though it is hard sometimes to stand *the Laughter of Fools*, the Trial of *cruel Mockings* and Scourgings, and especially of Bonds and Imprisonments. But here is the *Crown*, that he will not be ashamed of *us*, when he comes in the *Glory of his Father*, as of an Eternal Equal ; and that of *his Angels*, as the Royal Guards. We now say, that he is *our God* ; we say it in a Cloud of Shame, and a Throng of Dan-

^{2 Thef. i.} gers : And he will then say, *they are my People*. And how great a Day will that be, when he comes to be glorified in his Saints, and admired *in them that believe* : that is, who have believed our Word, our Report, to whom the Arm of the Lord has been revealed !

3.) Winning Christ is the *Close* of all their Troubles. What I said under the last Head is so nearly related to this, that I may be excus'd from much Enlargement. Believers are always hated by the World upon the *same Principles*, though they are not always used in the *same Way*. We have a *Liberty* that our Fathers had not: Though, on the other hand, the *Doctrines* that were scarce disputed in their Day, are treated with Contempt in ours. Some have cry'd up the Bible with a design to pervert it. But now they are *unmask'd*, and take the liberty to deny and lampoon it. However, in the worst of Times we know the worst of the Case, that we may fall into the Hands of those who kill the Body, and *after that have n*

mon

more that they can do. There is an end of it : And what comes next ? Whither have they got, and how do they fare that went out of ^{Rev. vii.} great *Tribulation* ? You'll see from the whole ^{14, 15, 16,} ^{17.} that is said of them, that Christ is all in all. First, they *wash'd their Robes and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb*; and therefore, *διὰ τοῦ τόπου*, because of this thing, this washing, this cleansing, or rather this meritorious Blood, they are *before the Throne of God*, and serve him Day and Night in his Temple ; and he that sits upon the Throne shall dwell among them. They shall *hunger no more, nor thirst any more*. Necessities from *within* are all over ; and so are Troubles from *without* : neither shall *the Sun smite them, nor any Heat*. And who takes this care of them ? The *Lamb*, that gave them his Blood upon the Cross, is now *in the midst of the Throne* ; that having wash'd them, he may *feed them, and lead them to Rivers of living Water*, which will be ever present, and God shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes, as to what is *past*. The Shame and Grief, that we are to have laid upon us, are so far from being a *Bar*, that they are a *Step to the Dignity of a Throne*. This ^{2 Cor. iv.} light *Affliction* that lasteth for a moment, works ^{17.} for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory.

4.) This winning Christ is receiving *the Gift of God*. We may ever cry out, Grace, Grace. The Father gave him to us ; the Son gives himself for us ; the Holy Spirit gives him *in us* ; and in all these Applications he is

Col. i. 27. our *Hope of Glory* : Or otherwise we must resolve the whole Happiness of a Believer into his own Merit at the long run. Christ deserves *Heaven* ; but who deserves *Christ* ? He makes us worthy of the high Calling : But who makes us worthy of *him* ? Here our Merit has no room. In our Title and Claim to Heaven we have an *imputed Merit* ; but in our Relation to Christ we have *none* at all ; 2 Cor. ix. and must say, *Thanks be to God for his unspeakable Gift.* ^{15.} He so loved the World, as to give ^{16.} Joh. iii. 16. his only-begotten Son into the World. ^{17.} iv. 10. Thus our Saviour speaks of himself to the Woman of Samaria : If thou hadst known the *Gift of God*, and who it is that, &c.

2. Another Thing that our Apostle wishes, is, that he may be *found in Christ* : This as he explains it is, by *not having on his own Righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is by the Faith of the Son of God, the Righteousness, which is of God by Faith.* Here are two Distinctions as plain as ever Words can make them.

(1.) There is a Righteousness of *his own* ; what he had either by Inherence, or Improvement ; the *Principles of Grace* that he had received, or the *Works of Righteousness* that he had *done* : In opposition to this there is what he calls the *Righteousness God*, that is altogether without him ; of which Faith is indeed the *Receiver*, but not the *Material*.

(2.) There is the Righteousness of *the Law*, distinguish'd from the Righteousness that is of *God by Faith*. Now *the Law is not of Faith* :

That's a sacred eternal Maxim : What is attributed to the *one*, can never be transferr'd unto the *other*. The Righteousness of the Law Rom. x. is hing'd on this, *He that does these things shall* 5. 6. *live by them* : The Righteousness that is of *Faith speaks on this wise*, That we are to believe on another.

There is an Allusion to two Things that Persons used to be *found in*, as their main Security from all Danger and Punishment ; and either a Title, or a Suitableness to any Dignity conferr'd upon them.

1st, An Habitation, and
2dly, A Garment.

(1.) The Habitation I speak of was *the City* Num. *of Refuge* : The Manslayer was ever safe *in it* ; xxxv. and never could be so one moment *out of it*. This was a Figure of Christ, concerning whom we may say with the *Psalmist* ; *He that dwells* Psal. xcii. 1. *in the secret Place of the most High*, shall *abide* under the Shadow of the Almighty. The Directions given to one, who had thus slain another, and the Methods that he took, carry a noble Resemblance of a Sinner's Progress under the Wounds of an awakened Conscience ; his way of *flying from a Wrath to come* : First, He knew his *Cafe* and *Danger* ; that there is but a step between him and Death. There is no tarrying. The Delays of a single Hour may be fatal. Secondly, He knows his *Interest* and *Duty*, that there is but one way to escape *the Avenger of Blood*. Thirdly, He gets as fast as he can to the *Place appointed*, tells his *Cafe*, and begs an immediate

Entrance, lest he should be overtaken by the *Pursuer* whilst his Anger is hot. Fourthly, There he must *stay* till the Death of the High Priest, who was anointed with the holy Oil. To venture out, though but for an Hour, is as much as his Life is worth. Thus it is with a Soul who *feels the Powers of a World* to come: He runs, he flies for a *Refuge to the Hope that is set before him*; and he must never think of leaving it. You are to abide in Christ, till you come to stand before the great Congregation in Judgment.

Heb. vi.
18.

(2.) The *Garment* that he refers to was something that recommended a Person. It was more than ornamental, as you may conceive from that Parable, which alludes to Customs that we have not. A King, who had invited a great Company to the Marriage of his Son, comes in to see his Guests, and finds one that had *not on a Wedding-Garment*, at which he is not only offended, but astonish'd: Friend, *How camest thou hither, not having a Wedding Garment?* It certainly signifies something, that according to the Ceremonial of those Countries was of absolute necessity; and *without which* a Person was criminal for his entering in. The Affront was so great, that he is ordered to be bound Hand and Foot, and thrown into outer Darkness.

Matt.xxii.
11,12,13.

Of this Necessity is the Righteousness of Christ. And if you could suppose a Sinner got into Heaven without it, it would be said to him, Man, how camest thou in hither? He must immediately be turn'd out again with

a vengeance. The very Attempt to come without the Righteousness of Christ into Heaven, would be Guilt enough to deserve all the Pains of Hell. It is this that makes the Church rejoice in the Lord, and be joyful in their God, because he had clothed them with the Garments *Is. lxi. 10.* of Salvation, and covered them with the Robe of Righteousness. And this is the Custom in Heaven: When the Marriage of the Lamb is *Rev. xix. 8.* come, and his Wife has made herself ready; to her it is granted to be array'd in fine Linen, white and clean; and this fine Linen is the *Psal. xv.* Righteousness of the Saints. She is all glorious^{13.} within, but her Raiment is of wrought Gold; and she comes to the King in Robes of Needle-work.

Thus was the Matter represented to the Prophet Zachary. Thus God spake in Vision to *Zech. iii.* his holy one. He saw Joshua the Priest clothed^{3.} in filthy Garments, that gave Satan an advantage against him; he stood at his right-hand to resist, or accuse him: But the first Order was, to take away the filthy Garments, and *ver. 4.* cloath him with change of Raiment. He puts his own Sense upon this Action; *I have caused thine Iniquity to pass from thee.* Here does the Apostle desire to be found in Christ, for a Refuge, as the Hope that is set before him; and in the Righteousness of Christ, as a Robe that is thrown over him.

II. How comes he to be so sollicitous for a Privilege that he had already attain'd; to have it at a dying Hour, as the Time that he should most want it, and should best like it?

- 1.) Because *Nature* is then in its last *Agonies*.
- 2.) *Grace* in its utmost *Difficulties*.
- 3.) *Satan* is then ending the *Battle*. And,
- 4.) *Christ* is beginning his *Glory*.

Eccl. xii. 3. 1.) An Interest in the Righteousness of the Son of God by Faith is most needful at the Hour of Death, and the Evidence of it will be most comfortable, because Nature is in its last, and greatest *Agonies*. Then the *Pillars of the House* do tremble, and the strong Men bow themselves, *Desire* fails, and *Man* goes to his long home. We can have no more help from Meat and Drink, Food and Physick. When we apply to them for a Comfort in our fainting Pains, they will say, *It is not in me*. Friends and Relations may *feel* our Sorrows, but they cannot *ease* them. What by pity they take to *themselves*, takes nothing from *us*. The Hand of the Almighty lies heavy upon

Gal. vi. 5. us; and *every one bears his own Burden*. The World that Sinners have taken so much pains for, they are now to be parted from. The Inheritance of Fathers, the Gains of Labour and Wisdom, which have been too much *the Travail of their Souls*, they shall see no more. Here is a Day of Wrath where Riches cannot profit: And when Death is to *us*, what he will be to all the World, *the King of Terrors*, then to be attended by another *Messenger*

Job xxxiii. 23, 24. makes that *Messenger one of a thousand*, who says, *Deliver him from going down to the Pit, for I have found a Ransom*. This will make up the want of Friends and Physicians, Health and Life itself; for here is a Loving-kindness that

that is better than Life. Thus when *David* Psal. lxiii. had no more Defence from his Guards, no more ^{3.} xxiii. 4. Pleasure in his Kingdom, but walk'd through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, he feared no Evil, because God was with him; when all the rest was gone; his Rod and his Staff would comfort him: By that Rod he was guided: On that Staff he lean'd.

2.) Grace has then its greatest Difficulties. The usual Helps to it are all gone. There can be no more hearing of the Word, no Fellowship of the Saints, no Freedom and Composure of Mind for casting our Burden upon the Lord in Prayer. The Thoughts are in an Hurry; the Affections in a Tumult. And if Duties are our Righteousness, woe unto us, when we can perform them no longer. Supplications are but the Groans of Grief, the Chatterings of a Crane or Swallow. Our Breath is cut short; our Purposes are broken off. And is it not a Word in Season to those that are thus weary, when the Spirit brings to our Remembrance, what Christ has so often said, and what he is now ready to do, *I will* Heb. xiii. never, never, never leave thee, nor forsake thee? ^{5.}

“ My Obedience, says a dying Believer, is “ no more. I cannot hear, and pray, and “ meditate. It was always but little; but “ now it is nothing. How suitable to such “ a Complaint is a Revelation of that Obe- Rom. vi. dience, by which many are made Righteous? ^{19.} “ My Prayers are at an end; and I can only “ think what I cannot say: Lord, my Desire “ is before thee; and my Groaning is not hid “ from

Rom. vi. "from thee." But happy are they that then hear
 19. the joyful Sound, and can say, *It is the Voice*
 Luk. xxii. *of my Beloved that speaks: I have prayed for*
 32. *thee, that thy Faith fail not: My Grace is suf-*
 2 Cor. xii. *ficient for thee, though thine is not; and my*
 9. *Power is so far from needing thy Strength, that*
it is made perfect in thy Weakness.

3.) Satan is just then ending his *Battle*. And if it is a Rule with him to have *great rage*, when Rom. xvi. his *Time* is short; what a *Brush* may we expect, when the *God of Peace* is about to *bruise* 20. him *under our Feet?* Now is the *Time*; now or never. You have often *withstood* in the evil Eph. vi. *Day*; but the main *Concern* is, *having done all*
 13. *to be able to stand: As Samson* pray'd, when J. & g. xvi. he bowed himself with all his *Might*, *Lord*
 28. *strengthen me only this once, that I may be a-venge'd* on him that is my *Enemy*, and *ap-prov'd* of him who has chosen me to be a *Soldier*. The *victorious Blow* that is given Rev. xiii. him, the *Thing* by which you *overcome*, is the
 11. *Blood of the Lamb*. It is the *Lord* that rebukes Zech. iii. him, even the *Lord* that has chosen *Jerusalem*; 2. and lets him know, that this Person shall not go into the *Fire*, whom he has *pluck'd as a Brand out of it*. And what an easy end will it be of a terrible *War*, when the *Enemy*, that has so often rallied, is oblig'd to remember the *Battle, and do no more?*

4.) Christ is then beginning his *Glory*: His *Glory* that he will have *in his Saints*; his *Glory* that he will have *by them*; and his *Glory* that he will have *with them*. And therefore desiring to *win him* then, and be *found in him*, is, that

that we may have a place among those *Armies* Rev. xix.
of *Heaven* that follow him. It is always good
to see the King in his Beauty: But then we go ^{14.} in
forth, and behold him with the *Crown* wherewith Linen.
he is crown'd in the day of his Espousals, and ^{Cant. iii.}
the day of the Gladness of his Heart. ^{11.}

At that time he will proclaim his *Deity*, by
causing him that overcomes to inherit all things; Rev. xxi.
and saying, *I will be his God, and he shall be* ^{7.}
my Son. Then he does, what none but a *God* ^{Joh. xiv. 3.}
can do. *He comes again to be the Strength of Psal.*
our Hearts. He receives us to himself, that ^{lxviii. 26.}
where he is we may be also, and so becomes
our Portion for ever. “ I would commend
“ my Spirit to him in two Characters, which
“ he will then fill up to the uttermost, as a ^{Pet. iv.}
“ faithful Creator, who has made it; and a ^{19.}
“ God of Truth, who has redeem'd it.” Then ^{Psal.}
Again, he will be well pleased for his Righ- ^{xxxii. 5.}
teousness sake; and let Hell feel, and Heaven ^{Isa. xlvi. 21.}
see, what the Travail of his Soul was, when ^{iii. 11.}
he made it an Offering for Sin: That the
Birth has answered all those Pains. And tho'
he was in much Heaviness when his Time
drew near; yet he remembers no more the Anguish ^{Joh. xvi.}
for Joy, that so many Thousands are born ^{a- 21.}
among the Living in Jerusalem. The Guests
of his House are the Reward of his Blood.
The Marks of Death, that he received in the
midst of the Cross, are now translated to the ^{Rev. v. 5.}
midst of the Throne. Though the Tree on 6.
which he hung was a Root of Bitterness, yet
it sprung up with such a Merit, as brings in
the Ransomed of the Lord from every Kindred,

and Tongue, and People, and Nation. Whenever a Believer is carried up to Heaven, the Glories of a Redeemer are all crowding about him. Then it is seen with what Efficacy ^{Rev. xix.}
^{13.} *girds his Sword upon his Thigh*; with what Justness he is *clothed in a Vesture dipt in Blood*; and with what Propriety he is called, *The Word of God*.

Our deceased Friend, who made it his last Request, that I should serve you in this Place, upon this Occasion, has been so well known, that as you cannot be suppos'd to *want* his Character, I cannot be expected to *give* it. Nor would I at all run into the popular Vanity now, because that was never *his* Practice, and was always *my* Abhorrence. Very often Funeral Enlargements are full of *Partiality and Hypocrisy*; and are no less than offering Incense to the Dead, and no better than laying a Snare for the Living. I need not mention his Affability; his generous and charitable Carriage; his Easiness of Temper under great and uncommon Afflictions. Neither he, nor any other, can have a *good Report*, but *thro' Faith*. But let me only observe, That this *Doctrine* lived in his *Soul*, and his *Soul* in *that*. They were pleasant together in Life, and at Death were not divided. But I will keep my word, and stop short of those Enlargements, which he and I have often talk'd of with a mutual Detestation.

T H E

THE

SECOND SERMON.

I HAVE already consider'd it as a matter of Wonder, that such a one as *Paul the aged* was so desirous of winning Christ, and being found in him at Death. There are two things more that we may comprehend in his Case:

i. That this was ever the Doctrine of his *Ministry*. He determin'd when he came to *Corinth*, a City of Fame for all the Learning and Wisdom of the Philosophers, to *know nothing*, and to *preach nothing* but *Jesus Christ*, and *him crucified*. And what was this? Not ^{vgl. 17878} merely telling the Story of his Death, that he ^{is crucifixus} was betray'd by one, and condemn'd by others, ^{vix.} deliver'd up by the *Jews*, and crucified by the *Romans*: If that had been all that he meant by his Preaching, it could be no more than a Tale that is told. *Pilate*, or *Caiaphas*, or even *a Stranger in Jerusalem* might have made it ^{Luk. xxiv.} known to the World, that *Jesus of Nazareth* ^{18, 19, 20.} was a Prophet, mighty in Deed and in Word before God and all the People; and that the Rulers and Chief Priests took him and crucified him. All Mankind would *believe* this *Report*, if believing was no more than so much Credit given to an History. But,

1 Cor. i.
28.

Preaching Christ was declaring *a Redemption through the Blood of Jesus*. And it was this that made it *Foolishness* to them that *perish*. The Jews had no *stumbling* at his Death, they had rather a *Triumph*: But the *Imputation* of what he *did* to what we *wanted* was the great *Offence*: That the *Knowledge* of *Salvation* this way should be certain, and in any other way impossible: That we are *reconciled to God* by the *Blood* of Christ. We have no more *Concern* in *his Death* than *Abel's*, who was the first Person that died, as *Cain* was the first Man that was born; nor could the *Blood* of the one have *spoke better things* than that of the other, if it had not *spoke for us*: But here is the great Article, that he was *deliver'd for our Offences*.

Heb. xii.
24.Rom. iv.
25.

Ch. i. 5.

Gal. v.
14.

This Declaration is *the everlasting Gospel*, the *Doctrine of Heaven*. 'Tis preach'd and sung by the whole Assembly above; *To him that loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood, to him be Glory*. To this, as *the Pillar and Ground of Truth* was our Apostle a faithful Witness. And yet a *Doctrine* which he never forgot in all his Life, fixes itself with a great deal of *Weight* upon his *Thoughts* at the time of his Death. He is abundantly careful about his winning Christ *then*, though he had never any other Prize before him. How was it likely, or even possible, that a Man, who *gloried in nothing but the Cross of Christ*, should fly to any other Refuge? To be sure, what he recommended to *Timothy's Care*, was the matter of his own, to take heed to *himself*, and his *Doctrine*,

trine,

trine, and continue in it, as the only way of ^{1 Tim. iv.}
saving himself, and those that heard him. ^{16.}

" And this Confidence we have towards.
" God, that I wish for no other Comfort at
" Death, than to feel the Virtue of what I
" have preach'd in Life. May my Soul then
" have a *Fellowship* in those *Sufferings*, that I
" have always represented as your Righteous-
" ness! and *know the Power* of that *Resurrec-* ^{Phil iii.}
" *tion*, that comes in among the Arguments ^{10.}
" of Christ's Deity! For by this he was *de-*
" *clar'd to be the Son of God.*" As to those ^{Rom. i. 4.}
who preach, as the Heathen live, *without*
Christ, and Strangers to the Covenant of Pro-
mise, they'll be all in a hurry, when their
Hope is like the giving up of the Ghost, and
brush'd away as the Spider's Web. I trust the
same Doctrines, by which any have *fulfill'd*
their Ministry with care; will help them to
finish *their Course* with joy. What we have
pursued in the Pulpit, God will give us the
Application of on a Death-bed. At present we
would be able to say, that *as we have believ'd*
we have spoken; and in that hour may we also ^{2 Cor. iv.}
be able to say, that *as we have spoken we* ^{13.}
believe!

2. This was the Matter of his *Experience*. He does not talk as they that have *no Hope*. Nor are you to place his Wishes in an Opposition to that Assurance, in which he said, *I know in* ^{2 Tim. i.} *whom I have believed*, and am persuaded that ^{12.} he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that Day. He made others ^{Psf. I.} hear the *joyful Sound*; and he himself *walk'd* ^{lxix. 15.} *in*

in the Light of God's Countenance. Perhaps there was never any Minister that suffer'd more *without*, or less *within*. As to Watchings, Fastings, Tumults, Dangers, Reproaches, Envy's, Stripes and Cares, no body had more of them; but that which lightned these Afflictions, and made them fit easier, was, that he had *no Terrors of the Lord upon him*; no Arrows of the Almighty within him. He could sing in the Prison, and with his Feet in the Stocks make a joyful Noise to the God of *his Salvation*. The Spirit of the Man was able to *sustain his Infirmit*y, as he had nothing of *a wounded Spirit*, which none can bear. He was exceeding joyful in all Tribulations.

² Cor. i. 7. And as *his Sufferings for Christ* abounded; so ² Tim. iv. did *his Consolation by Christ*. When all for-
16. sook him, the Lord stood by him: and that
Act. xviii. one word, *Be of good Chear, Paul, for I am*
10. *with thee*, was a Voice from on high, above
Psal. xciii. the Waves of the Sea, and the Tumult of the
4. People.

And yet you see he has all his Cares at work about *winning Christ*, whom he had so often tasted to be gracious; and being *found in him*, to whom he had given himself up for ever. So that as no Danger could make him without *Hope*, no Assurance could make him without *Fear*. He had ever the Rejoycing that arose from the Testimony of his Conscience; and yet it is of so much Importance to *fall asleep in Peace*, that he would gladly be sure of *that*: And, having gone on conquering and to conquer, *at last* be more than Conqueror thro' him that had loved him.

I have shewn under what Allusions he speaks of his being found in Christ ; as a *Manlayer* was in his City of Refuge, and the *Guests* of the Table in a Wedding-Garment. But there are also two things more, that may be signified in this Expression : For Believers in that great, that terrible Day of the Lord, desire to be found,

1st, In Christ's Covenant : and

2dly, In his Collection. The first considers him as their *Fæderal-Head* : and the second as their *Family-Head* ; for all that the Father Joh. xvii. has given him shall be *with him* to behold his²⁴ Glory.

1. The Children of God are regarded and found *in Christ* upon the account of that Co-^{Zech. vi.} venant, that *Counsel of Peace* that was between^{13.} the Father and the Son. There is a being *in Gal. i. 16.* *Christ* that bears date from *the Revelation* of the Son of God *in us*. We have a Remission *Act. xxvi.* of Sins through the *Faith that is in him*. And^{19.} of this Indwelling does the Apostle speak, when he tells us of some old Disciples that were *in Christ before him* ; which can't be un-*Ron. xvi.* derstood of Election. But all those Favours^{7.} that take their turn *in time* are the Execution of a Plan that was laid *in Eternity*, of which the Scripture is so full and particular, that we read of it in every Form.

The Place of Happiness that the Blessed of *Mat. xxv.* the Father do enter into, was *prepared* for them^{34.} before *the Foundation of the World*. The Me- diator of the Covenant, by whom they are^{1 Pe. i. 20.} brought in, was verily *ordained* before the Foun- dation

dation of the World unto our Glory as well as his own. As to the Make and Frame of these Eph. i. 4 Decrees, we are said to be *chosen in him* before the Foundation of the World. Thus he loved Jer. xxxi. us with an everlasting Love. We are predesti- 3. nated unto the Adoption of Sons by Jesus Christ. Those Conversions that make up his Train in the World, are the Fruit of that Prospect he Joh. vi. 37 had before the World was. *All that the Father has given me, shall come to me.* They are given him before they come: And in that view he regards them before he receives them.

Now the Apostle wishes to be found in this Rev. xxi. Covenant, among those that are written in the 27. Lamb's Book of Life. And Christ ever men- tions this as their main rejoicing, not that the Spirits were subject to them; but that their Luk. x. 20 Names were written in Heaven. As to our Eph. i. 6 Justification, we are accepted in the Beloved Joh. xv. 2 as a true Sacrifice. As to our Sanctification, we are living Branches in him as a true Vine. Jude 1. As to our Perseverance, we are preserved in Theff. iv. Christ Jesus, and called. And as to our last 14. Concern, we fall asleep in Jesus; dying in the Rom. xiv. Lord, as well as dying to him. So that from 8. one Eternity to another, (if I may speak of an undivided State in a way of Partition) we are found in Christ; thus consider'd, thus elec- ted, thus maintain'd, and thus compleated, 1 Cor. i. Of God we are in Christ Jesus.

30. 2. He is also a domestical Head. Of him Eph. iii. the whole Family both in Heaven and Earth are 15. named. Therefore desiring to be found in Pf. lxxxiv. him, is to be blessed with those, who dwell in

in his House, and who shall ever praise him. This Collection he had always in view. He came into this World to seek and to save what was his own. He went out of it, that he ^{Joh.xi.52.} might gather into one the Children of God, that were scattered abroad: And of this he had a full Assurance, when he sat down at the right-hand of God. Then said the Father to him, thou shalt have the *Dew of thy Youth.* ^{Psal. cx. 3.} And so he had; for the first Sermon that was preach'd after his Ascension was the *Womb of the Morning*; and the *early Dew* of that young Interest was the Conversion of *three thousand* ^{Act. ii. 41.} Souls. Then he gather'd them in very fast: And his Word kept running upon Earth, tho' ^{Psf. cxlvii.} not always so *swiftly*. He is yet taking one ^{15.} of a City, or two of a Tribe. *Many are called* by his Ministers, who can neither know, nor make the difference; and the *few* that he has chosen he calls by his Grace, which is ever efficacious and attractive; for when he *draws*, we *run*. And thus he will continue to do till ^{Cant. i. 4.} he gets his full number of the Living in *Jerusalem*. There are *many Mansions* in his Fa- ^{Joh.xiv. 2.} ther's House; and they must all be filled. There are to be no vacant Rooms, no desolate Apartments without an Inhabitant. Ministers are sent abroad to invite, call in, persuade, and compel, *that his House may be filled*. And ^{Luk. xiv.} among those our Apostle desir'd to be found; ^{23.} and so does every Believer, that it may be said of our *Assemblies upon Mount Sion*, when the ^{15. iv. 5.} Lord counts, and writes up the People, *This,* ^{Psf. lxxxvii.} *and that Man was born there.*

I would reflect upon this part of my Subject with a particular Application to them that are at ease in *Sion*.

(1.) If you don't desire to be found in this Company at last, you shall never come there.

Job xxi. 14. Your Language to Christ now is, *Depart from us*: But would you be ameng them, to whom Matt. xxv. 41. he says, *Depart from me*? That I can scarce 2 Pet. ii. 15. imagine. *Balaam* was a vile, covetous Wretch, Jude 11. Numb. 32. ran greedily after his Error for a Reward; and yet he says, *Let me die the Death of the Righteous, and let my latter End be like his*. Would you be found among Swearers, Adulterers, and all *Lyars*, who have their part in the Lake that burns with Fire and Brimstone? You may have a Relish of their Conversation now; but can you wish for a Portion with Hypocrites, and Unbelievers; with them that despise Christ, blaspheme his Name, ridicule his Deity, profane his Sabbaths, and neglect his Worship; who live without Prayer, and die without Hope? What if God should make that to be your *Lot*, which you have made to be your *Choice*, and bind you up in the Bundle of Tares, that as with them you have drunk, with them you may burn? *Let the Sinners in Sion be afraid, and Fearfulness surprize the Hypocrite*.

(2.) If you desire to be found in the Company of those, that are with the Lamb upon Mount *Sion*, you must be found among those that follow the Lamb now. If you are to be in the Apostles *Fellowship* at last, you are to

continue

continue in their *Doctrine* here, in breaking of *Act ii. 46.* Bread, and in *Prayers*. Never think of a *Salvation* of the *Soul*, which is the *End of Faith*, *1 Pet. i. 9.* if you have not the *Beginning* of it. Death will not do so absurd a thing as to send you among *Saints*, whom he finds among *Sinners*. How can you expect to *stand* in the *Congregation* of the *Righteous*, when you never *come* *Ps. i. ult.* into it? 'Tis by a patient *Continuance* in well-*Rom. ii. 7.* doing that Believers *seek* for Honour, Glory, and Immortality. And can they be numbered *Ps. xxiv. 6.* in the *Generation* of these *Seekers*, who never desire to be with them? No, no. When you are swept off from the *Ground* that you have cumbered, God will dispose of you as he *finds* you then *doing*. Your *Company* in another *World* is settled in this.

It has been the *Comfort* of some Believers on a *Death-bed*, that they could say with *David*, "Lord I have loved the *Habitation* of *Ps. xxvi. 8.* " thy *House*, and have been looking, breathing, melting, moying to the *Place* where "thine Honour dwells. I have asked the "way to *Sion* in a regular *Course* of *Worship*. "I have set my Face thitherwards by an uniform *Conversation*. I have hated the *Congregation* of *Evil-doers*, the *Songs* of the "Drunkard, the *Seat* of the *Scornful*. And "I hope thou wilt not tumble me into a *Society* that I have always abhorred. I have "had none of their *Company* here, and take "it for granted that I shall not be condemn'd "to it for ever." 'Tis a *righteous* thing, that *be that walks with wise Men should be wise*, and *Prov. xiii. 20.*

Dan. xii. 3. with them shine as the Brightness of the Firmament, and that the Companion of Fools should be destroyed.

But I would make the Application more general and diffusive in some Deductions from this Text, which are of a practical Nature. It was, you see, our Apostle's Wish to win Christ, and be found in him; and we may take it for granted, *considering the End of his Conversation*, and how ready he was to be offered up, that the Desire accomplished became sweet to his Soul. How miserable then is the case of those, who never had any of his Cares, his Thoughts, his Desires, and his Hopes! *Winning Christ* supposes a fervent Mind, hearty Labour, continued Pains, and persevering Motion. Can Sinners pretend to any thing of this? Can they hope to find what they never sought? To obtain what they have oppos'd? And receive that Crown upon their Heads, which they have trampled under their Feet? How should the Son of God be their Saviour, who has been their Scorn? Or that Righteousness any thing to them, which they have counted an *unholy thing*? Being found in him, is the closing Article: With that Believers go out of the World in his Name, and have an abundant Entrance into his Joy. Consider these Four Things,

- 1.) How miserable is the Case of those, who are found in their *Sins*?
- 2.) How insufficient is their Security, who are found in their own *Righteousness*?
- 3.) How despicable is their Confidence, who are found in their *Party*?
- 4.)

4.) How full is their Happiness, who are found in their *Saviour*?

1.) Miserable is the Case of those, who are found in their *Sins*. And that is the Portion not only of the Unclean, but the Unbelieving. The Jews *search'd the Scriptures, made their* ^{Joh. v. 39.} *boast of God, and approv'd the things that were* ^{Rom. iii.} *most excellent*: And yet so great a weight does ^{17.} Christ lay upon an Evangelical Faith, that he tells them, *If ye believe not that I am he, ye* ^{Joh. viii.} *shall die in your Sins.* 'Tis no great matter ^{24.} what Rules and Maxims, what Schemes of Charity, Free-thinking, and *moral Philosophy*. Men may lay down, who become vain in their Imaginations. Alas! when *the Judgment is* ^{Rev. xx.} *set, their Books are not to be opened, unless to* ^{12.} *the Confusion of the Authors: But there is another Book that determines who shall enter* ^{xxii. 14.} *through the Gates into the City.* You may be sure whatever these vain Talkers and Deceivers say, shall not controul what Christ has said: A lying Lip is but for a moment; whereas the Word of the Lord endures for ever. He will be *justified in his sayings, and will overcome* ^{Rom. iii.} *when he is judged; for every Mouth must be* ^{4. 19.} *stopt, and all the World become guilty before God.*

At present I would set before me the Case of those, who have no shew of any Righteousness by the Law, and no regard to any by the Gospel; Who swear, and curse, and drink, and revel, and commit Iniquity with greediness; who steal, and cheat, and lye, and scold, and have not so much as the Form of Godliness; Who seldom hear what God says to them in

Sermons,

Sermons, and have nothing to say *to him* in Prayer ; Who talk of Religion in jest, and hate it in earnest. Had your Souls been requir'd of you the last Night, where had you been this Morning ? From what Company would Death have taken you ? After what Actions had he called you to Judgment ? Would you desire to be snatch'd away from the Steam of a Tavern to the Smoak of the *Jer. ii. 57.* Pit ; and being drunk, to be made to *sleep a perpetual Sleep, and not awake ?* Consider two things : *die* you must ; and *repent* you do not.

Heb. ix. 27.

1. *It is appointed for all Men once to die :* And yet, tho' you can't deny it, you don't believe it ; for you act as if you had made a *Covenant* with Death, or rather had got a *Divorce* from it. You put the evil Day far from you ; and yet it is not one moment farther off. Perhaps the next Work you shall be called to, is to fall sick and die. God has struck some of you with Pain, Weakness, Faintings, and an Incapacity of pursuing divers Lusts and Pleasures ; and yet the moment his Hand is taken off from you, yours are lifted up against *him*. And why should he spare you again ? How can it be worth our while to beg that he would do it, when every new Reprieve does but throw you into a new Rebellion ? He'll grow as weary of repenting as you are. You do not know how near you are come to the top of that Measure, by which you will fill up your Iniquities. The next drunken Frolick may be the last ; and give you but one step from

Debauchery

Debauchery to Torment ; from a *Cup* of Riot to one of *Trembling*. The Transition may be as swift, as it is just.

Again, The Earthly-minded, who have been so often called away from things below, and called up to those above, are never the better, but say as *Joab* the Son of *Zerviah* did, *Nay*, ^{2 Kings} *but I will die here*. God says to Death, as *Solomon* did to the Executioner, Take him at his Word, and *do to him as he has said*. The Lord has waited to be gracious these twenty, thirty, forty, fifty Years, to give you space for unloosing the Cords and Cares of this Life ; and yet you have rather fastned them. 'Tis time he should break these Bands asunder, and overwhelm you with the Thunder of that Question, *Thou Fool, this Night* ^{Luk. xiii.} *thy Soul shall be required of thee*, and then, *whose shall these things be, which thou hast provided*? No Sinner can be riper for the *Grave* than he that's buried in the *World*. His Life and his Death are all of a piece. They are each of them no more than *loading him with thick Clay*. He has been entomb'd in his Trade, his Shop, his Busines, and Estate ; and therefore it is but taking him out of one Sepulchre, and putting him into another.

Again, An Angry Man, that abounds in Strife, has lived in a Tumult of Mind : And some of those *Tempests* shal carry him away ^{Job xxvii.} *in the Night* ; and a *Storm* made up of God's Wrath, and his own, *burl him out of his Place*.

2. Repent you do not. You always design it, and yet never begin it. You are making

king more *Work* for it, but no *Haste* to it. You think it is in your Power, tho' every body sees it is not in your Inclination. We should Joh.v. 40. displease you in saying, *you cannot come to Christ*, but we may without hesitation say, *that you will not*.

Look back upon the Sins of your Youth, of which your Bones are full, and your Consciences too. Either you have been in bitterness of Spirit, or you have not. If you have, you would never rake into an old Wound, or talk with Pleasure of what you felt with Pain. And if you have not, here is a long Account to be made up with him, who has numbered your Iniquities, and sealed them in a Bag, and Psal.xc. 8. set your secret Sins in the Light of his Countenance.

It is true, I have Authority to tell you in Joh. i. 7. the Name of him, whose *Blood cleanses from all Sins*, that it is not *too late* to turn and live. But I fear you will be of Opinion that it is *too soon*; which I am sure it never can be. A Repentance that we have staid *too long*, is never to be repented of. All Believers are of that Opinion. But a Sorrow that we have been *too hasty*, cannot be heard among those, that, like Doves of the Valley, mourn every one for his Iniquity.

2.) Insufficient is their Security, who are found in their own *Righteousness*. And this is not always the Righteousness of the Law. I am afraid there are many who think to be saved by a number of those Actions that God never appointed. This is *their own* with a witness.

witness. Their Religion is not abstaining from ^{2 Cor. vii.} all Filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, but from ^{1 Tim. iv.} Meats and Drinks ; not counting the Sabbath ^{3.} a delight, but observing holy Days that Men have devised in their own Hearts ; not worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth, but loading their Devotion with ceremonial Customs that Christianity has discarded. This is no Righteousness properly. 'Tis not so much as that of the Law, because the Law never bid you do it. Consider,

1. God will never own what he has not appointed, or receive that as a Righteousness, which is not so much as a Duty. Don't tell me of Church-Power. I know but of One, who is head over all things to the Church : ^{Eph. i. ult.} And he has not given out of his own Hands an Authority of making, mending, altering, changing, curtailing, or enlarging any one Ordinance. I dare not deliver any thing to you that I have not received of the Lord. Inquire therefore whose Image and Superscription the Appointment has, which you observe : If it be only Cæsar's, Councils, or Bishops, give them back again the Things that are theirs : But render only to God the Things that are God's.

But we will suppose your Devotions are what he has commanded. Superstition is a doing more than he appointed ; and real Devotion is doing less. We don't pray and hear as we ought to do. When we would do good, Evil is present with us : And the Man that ^{Rom. vii.} knows not and laments not this, is unacquainted ^{21.}

with himself. He that is alive in his own Opinion, must be so without the Law ; for when the Commandment comes, Sin will revive, and he shall die.

Rom. x. 3. 2. Take heed that your trusting in these Things without Christ, is not setting them up in opposition to him. If you go about to establish a Righteousness of your own, 'tis for want of submitting to the Righteousness of God.

Some tell you, that Justification by Faith is the Demolition of Holiness ; but they lye and do not the Truth. If we had not other sort of Works to shew our Faith by than *their* who deny it, it would be a dead one indeed.

Phil. iii. 3. There is not only a Harmony, but an inseparable Union between worshipping God in the Spirit, rejoicing in Jesus Christ, and having no Confidence in the Flesh. This three-fold Cord cannot be quickly broken. Our Duties begin with coming to Christ ; they continue with leaning on him ; they are closed by leaving all with him. He will never approve of *your* Works, which commit a Robbery upon *his* ; that steal away your Souls from a Dependence, and his Glory from an Establishment. If your Robes do not take their Dignity from the Blood of the Lamb, they are Robes unwash'd, filthy Garments. We our-

If. lxiv. 6. selves are *an unclean thing*, and none can bring Job xiv. 4. a clean Thing out of an unclean ; no, not one. Your praying, hearing, and Acts of Communion are the Way to Christ, but not the Way from him : And if in this Sense

you

you are making *Flesh your Arm, your Hearts* Jer. xvii. 5.
are departing from the living God.

3.) Their Confidence is most to be despis'd, who are only found in *their Party*. And yet, as contemptible as such a poor Refuge appears to be, 'tis the most common of any in the World. People make the Kingdom of God to consist in *Meats and Drinks*, in divers Washings, and carnal Ordinances, Garments spotted by the Flesh, empty Denominations, and lineal Successions, things my Soul can never enter into, nor they enter into it. *Happy is the Man that condemns* Rom. xiv. *not himself in the Thing that he allows*: And 22. yet he has no right to condemn others: But if he has Faith, he must have it to himself.

1. This oftentimes diverts our Zeal from what is *most important*, and strains it upon what is *less so*. You will have a Swearer, a Drunkard, and an Adulterer disputing about the *Government* of the Church, who knows not one Word of its *Doctrine*. You will find Persons compassing Sea and Land to make a *Proselyte*, who have very little care to make a *Convert*. I seldom see the *Disputers of this World* in so much Anxiety about the Things of another.

The *Jews* thought within themselves to say, that they had *Abraham* to their Father: And as they might plead that Relation with a Truth; so never can any national Professor use the Argument to a better purpose; Because by virtue of their being *Israelites*, to

Rom. ix. 9. them pertained the Adoption, the Glory, the Covenants, the Service of God, and the Promises. The Apostle allows all this to his impenitent Countrymen. But what did these Peculiarities signify to those who had turned their Glory into Shame? They were certainly the only true Church upon Earth; and had an undoubted lineal Priesthood. Moses's Chair

Mat. xxiii. 2. is spoke of with more Honour than ever Peter's was. And yet God has forsaken his

Heritage, and made it a Desolation. He says of the Church, that he once espoused to himself, Your Mother is no longer my Wife, neither am I her Husband. And what then can we think of a Church, who always appears in the Attire of an Harlot? whose Filthiness is in her Skirts, and has no other Antiquity than being old in Adulteries?

2. Our greatest Concern in a dying Hour is about that which will be the Happiness of all God's People, and not the peculiar of some among them; what may be said of Believers in every Kindred and Tongue and Nation; that in which they are united, not in what they are distinguished. When you come to

Heb. xiii. 9. die, you will find it a good thing that the Heart be establish'd with Grace, and not with Meats, which have not profited them, that have been occupied therein. When I see a Person differing from me, who appears to have the Power of Godliness most at heart, I cannot bring myself to be of his Opinion, but I can easily come into his Communion, and am sorry there are any Terms of Church-Fellowship to keep me out.

out. *Let us receive one another, as Christ has received us all, to the Glory of the Father.* Rom. xv. 7.

We can strive together for the Faith of the ^{Phil. i. 27.} *Gospel* with one Spirit, and with one Mind, and in whatever we are otherwise minded, perhaps, we ought not to strive; it is scarce worth the while: But sure I am it is vastly beneath the *Faith of the Gospel*. What will it signify to my Soul on a Death-bed, how I thought about the Subject, or the Mode of Baptism? The Number of Years, or the Quantity of Water that is required? I shall then know that the *Kingdom of God is within me*, and has little to do with meer *Externals*. Perhaps these things have fired most of our Zeal, and devoured most of our Time: But we shall not have room for a single *Thought* about them, when the Judge is at the Door. Then there is another *Baptism*, that we are to be baptized with; and how shall we be straitned, till it be ^{Rom. vi.} *accomplish'd*? Being baptized into Christ will be ^{Col. ii. 11.} the main Concern: and as many as have put ^{12.} on Christ, are truly *baptized into him*, as well as *circumcised with him*.

When one of the Elders in Heaven ask'd the Apostle, *What are these who are array'd in white Robes?* Rev. vii. and whence came they? It ^{13.} would have been a silly Answer to say, They came from *Galatia, Rome, or Corinth*; that they are of the *Circumcision*, or of the Churches among the Gentiles. They had no Garb of any particular Country, or Denomination. As they are with the *Lamb* upon Mount *Sion*, they have no other Name than *his* on their ^{Fore-xxii. 4.} *heads*.

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beds. Our Souls will then be as large as the Place they go to, where all Sorts and Parties, that keep the Word of God, and the Faith of Jesus, are grown into an holy Temple in the Lord.

Many take pleasure in a thing of nought: and I often think that God has pour'd Contempt upon it, by the usual Professions that are made at the Gallows, where a Person seems to die with the Satisfaction of doing it in the Church of *Rome*, or the Church of *England*. Alas! what are either of these to the purpose? Will this be ask'd in another World? I can't but fear, that the poor Wretches, that have so much formal *Cant* put into their Mouths, are not at all instructed about the one thing needful. I think it beneath a Minister of the Gospel, to make a Party Story of a common Salvation. The Voice that *John* heard, from Heaven, order'd him to write those blessed that die in the Lord. There are thousands in the Church, who are not of it. Salvation is not a thing administred in Bundles and Communities, but it's all personal, individual; and the rejoicing we have from it is in ourselves alone, and not in another. If there is a godly Man upon Earth that differs from you, the Distinction must be about things, that are not essential, which dont relate to our holding the Head. And to call him a *Schismatick*, whom Christ has cleansed is a Wrath that can do you no good, and can do him no harm: nor will it be any part of my Peace on a Death-bed, that I have rejected one, whom Christ has receiv'd. Therefore,

Jude 3.

Rev. xiv.
13.

4.) Let us be most concern'd about that *full Happiness*, that flows from our winning *Christ*, and being found in *him*. This will be the only Inquiry then, and it is pity there should be any other now. Upon this alone does the Foundation of God stand sure, having *this Seal, the Lord knows them that are his.* *With* ² *Tim. ii.* *this we are secure in all Denominations;* and ¹⁹ *without it we can be saved in none of them.*

1. This is our Protection *in Death*; the only thing wherewith we can *come before the Lord*, and bow ourselves before the most high God. If our *moral Righteousnes* is no better than *filthy Rags*, our *Party Names* are no better than *foppish ones*. Circumcision avails nothing, nor Uncircumcision, but a *new Creature*. What are *Ordinations* but the work of Men's Hands? and what are *Ceremonies* but the Lusts of their Minds? What are all their superficial *Canons* but the Rudiments of the World, that neither come *from Christ*, nor do they lead *to him*? And though some of these intitle Men to Places of Gain, which meer Faith and Piety will not do, yet we have little Reason to think that *Gain to be Godliness*. However, this will all pass for nothing when we come to die. Endowments, Dignities, Pluralities, and Honours are at an end. And though a Person that *wins these* may be found in the *Church*, yet if he's not found in *Christ* he is of the Synagogue of Satan. To boast of our Church or Party, and cry out, *the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are these,* will be dull Work upon a Death-bed; *trusting in lying*

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lying Words that cannot Profit ; and trusting in a Lye then is cheating ourselfes for ever. We have only to do with him, who guides us by his Counsel, and receives us to his Glory ; having no other in Heaven but him, and none upon Earth that we desire besides him.

2. This is both a Conveyance and a Connection to those Joys that are *set before you*. You then win *Christ*, and will never lose him : you are then found in him, and he will never lose you. What you gain at last, you gain for ever. *Your Joy shall no Man take from you.* *Tis an everlasting Righteousness* that you then lay hold on : and as you will not let it go, so it carries you thro' the Valley of Death, and sets you safe in that goodly Mountain and *Lebanon*. It ties Death and Life together : and scarce allows any Distance between the Security of the one, and the Felicity of the other. You go at once from *dying in Faith*, to reign in Vision. The Saviour whom you then look at through a Glafs darkly, you shal see face to face, and be ever with the Lord.



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